

Sparta Mountain Wildlife Management Area Forest Stewardship Plan

- Public Information Session -

NJ Department of Environmental Protection

Division of Fish & Wildlife

In partnership with:

NJ Audubon



Sparta Mountain WMA Forest Stewardship Planning

2009: Original Forest Stewardship Plan (FSP) approved

2010-2015: Four forestry activities completed (one initiated)

2015: Process for revised plan initiated, internal/external technical stakeholder meetings

Dec 2015: Draft of revised plan posted on the Division of Fish and Wildlife website

Feb-Sep: 2016: Numerous external/internal stakeholder meetings

May 2017: Forest Stewardship Plan approved for release by Commissioner



www.spartamountainfacts.nj.gov

Stakeholders Outreach

- Over 2,500 comments received
 - Local residents, state and non-state residents, non-profits, natural resource professionals, national organizations and government agencies
- Large number and variety of comments
 - Worked to better clarifying our intent of the plan and be transparent about our activities at SMWMA
- All activities will be outlined and updated on Spartamountainfacts.nj.gov
- Future outreach to local municipalities and through listserv announcements



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Forest Age Class Diversity – Dynamic Forest

- Clarified meaning of Dynamic Forest
 - Outside experts support the need to manage for the dynamics of disturbance dependent forests and balance the forest age classes
- Provided results of analyses on how forests in northern NJ have changed
 - Habitat change analysis for NJ WMAs: lost 23,000 acres of successional habitat over the past 20 years
- Clarified harvest techniques
 - 322 acres will have a single tree selection, group selection or overstory removal
 - 100 acres will be shelterwood treatment
 - 208 acres will be modified tree seed treatment



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Forestry Stewardship Council Certification

- In 2012, New Jersey Audubon Society secured external funding to help develop Forest Stewardship Plans and include Sparta Mtn WMA in its FSC group certification for 5 years
 - No cost to the DEP/DFW
 - Allowed DEP/DFW to experience the FSC process
- Maintaining FSC certification requires:
 - Significant direct cost for annual audit fees
 - Substantial staff time to document compliance with standards
- NJDEP/DFW is **no longer** seeking FSC certification for Sparta Mountain WMA, but will continue to move forward with sustainable management



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Threatened & Endangered Plants

- Protective buffers
 - Will be incorporated around occurrences of rare plant species to avoid and/or minimize impacts
- Additional buffers
 - Determined after consultation with the DEP's Office of Natural Lands Management
- NJDEP's Land Management Review Process
 - All activities described in the FSP go through internal review to further avoid and/or minimize impacts to threatened and endangered species (plants and wildlife), cultural resources and/or freshwater fisheries resources

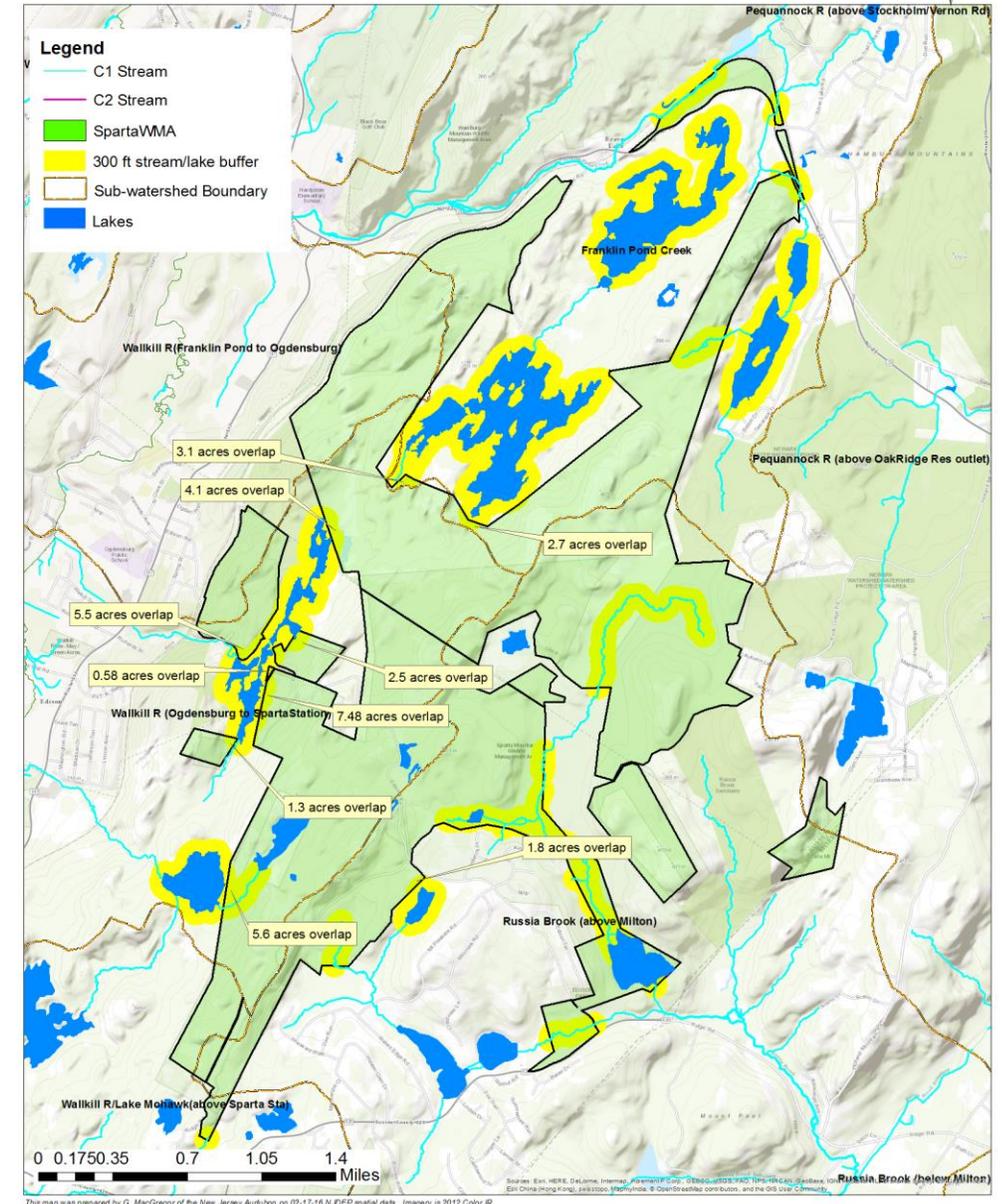


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Water Quality Protective Measures

- Thorough review by water quality experts
 - NJDEP's Division of Water Quality
 - NJDEP's Division of Land Use Regulation
 - Confirmed that conservation measures and recommendations outlined in NJ's Best Management Practices (BMP's) are effective to protect water quality
- NJ & NY's BMPs are widely recognized methods for safeguarding water quality
- Protective Buffers
 - No forest management treatments resulting in a substantial decrease in forestry canopy will be carried out within 300 feet of privately-owned water bodies, C1 streams or within 100 feet of any private residence

Sparta Mountain WMA Showing Water Features & Buffer with HUC14 Watersheds



Soil Conservation Measures

- Consultation with Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Custom report generated for Sparta Mountain WMA by NRCS
 - Slight – Moderate susceptibility to erosion
 - Moderately suited for harvest equipment
 - High soil restoration potential
 - Support conservation measures outlined in BMP to be effective
- NRCS inspected previous forestry activity sites at SMWMA
 - No rutting, No erosion, and No evidence of soil compaction



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Permitting Compliance

- NJDEP Division of Land Use Regulation confirmed:
 - Normal forestry activities (carried out in accordance with an approved FSP) **qualify** for an **exemption** under the Highlands Applicability Determinations 7:38-2.4(b)
 - Freshwater Wetlands Regulations and the Flood Hazard Regulations also **allow** for and **exempt** the forestry activities conducted in accordance with an approved Forest Stewardship Plan
 - Exemptions exist for private and public land with approved FSPs because:
 - Forest Stewardship Plans follow Forestry BMPs
 - Regulatory entities recognize that approved forestry plans do not cause the adverse impacts of other regulated activities



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Comment/Question Period

- Speakers approach the microphone by Speaker # no more than 5 at a time
- Each speaker will have a maximum of 3 minutes to ask a question(s) or make their comments
- Panel members will answer relevant questions at the end of 3 minutes
- Speakers should take their seats after their question(s) have been answered
- Everyone that has signed up ahead of the meeting will be given an opportunity to make their comments or ask their question(s)

Speaker # 005

Sparta Mountain WMA Forest Stewardship Plan Public Information Session

Each speaker will be given 3 minutes to ask questions or comment on the Sparta Mtn WMA FSP.

Comments on other topics will not be allowed.

- When your number is called, please line up behind the microphone.
- **Green light** indicates the start of 3 mins.
- **Amber** light indicates 30 seconds left.
- **Red** light indicates end of 3 minutes.

The Microphone will be turned OFF at the end of 3 minutes or if inappropriate comments are made.

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